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Proposed School Board Budget Aims to Maintain Educational Programs

The Greater Victoria School Board has unveiled its proposed 2007-2008 budget which maintains all educational services at existing levels, avoiding cutbacks for the third consecutive year.

“This level of stability is without precedent in the last two decades.” said Board Chairman Michael McEvoy.

“Over the past few years we have made prudent and, in many cases, difficult decisions to protect and enhance programs for our students.” said Board Chairman Michael McEvoy. “The effects of these decisions have benefitted student learning throughout the District.”

However, because provincial government funding is tied to student numbers, the projected future decline in enrolment continues to be a serious concern to the Board.

During the past few years, the Board has anticipated this year’s revenue shortfalls due to declining enrolment by putting aside one-time funds for future use. This year’s budget will be balanced by utilizing these savings to offset a \$1.8 million dollar operating deficit.

However, future budgetary pressures including a projected \$4-5 million deficit for the 08-09 school year will continue to grow as enrolment declines and the provincial per student grant fails to keep pace with educational costs.

“The School Board will continue to advocate for more resources for our children while prudently planning for the future.” said Board Chairman Michael McEvoy.

The proposed budget will now be circulated to schools and the community for feedback. Budget details can be found on the Board’s web page at www.sd61.bc.ca. The next public consultative meeting will be held on April 4 in the Auditorium at S.J. Willis School, 923 Topaz Avenue, Victoria. Please contact the School Board Office at 475-4106 in order to be placed on the Speaker’s List.

The Board of School Trustees will debate the Budget on Tuesday April 17th, 2007 at 7:00 pm in the Boardroom at 556 Boleskine Road, Victoria.

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